

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

4 October 2018

Mr. Caitlin Russell  
MuckRock News  
DEPT MR 45752  
411A Highland Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Reference: F-2018-00295

Dear Mr. Russell:

This is a final response to your 9 November 2017 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for records pertaining to **the April 15, 1969 incident in which North Korea shot down a United States Navy Lockheed EC-121M Warning Star**. We processed your request in accordance with the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended, and the CIA Information Act, 50 U.S.C. § 3141, as amended.

We completed a thorough search for records responsive to your request and located one document, consisting of 10 pages, which we determined can be released in its entirety. A copy of the document is enclosed at Tab A.

We also determined that 21 documents, consisting of 143 pages, can be released in segregable form with deletions made on the basis of FOIA exemptions (b)(1), (b)(3), and NR Record. "Not Responsive Record" is used for sections that do not mention the topic you requested. Copies of the documents and an explanation of exemptions are enclosed at Tab B.

Additional material was determined to be currently and properly classified and must be denied in its entirety on the basis of FOIA exemptions (b)(1) and (b)(3). Exemption (b)(3) pertains to information exempt from disclosure by statute. The relevant statutes are Section 6 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, as amended, and Section 102A(i)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended.

As the CIA Information and Privacy Coordinator, I am the CIA official responsible for this determination. You have the right to appeal this response to the Agency Release Panel, in my care, within 90 days from the date of this letter. Please include the basis of your appeal.

If you have any questions regarding our response, you may contact us at:

Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, DC 20505  
Information and Privacy Coordinator  
703-613-3007 (Fax)

Please be advised that you may seek dispute resolution services from the CIA's FOIA Public Liaison or from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) of the National Archives and Records Administration. OGIS offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. You may reach CIA's FOIA Public Liaison at:

703-613-1287 (FOIA Hotline)

The contact information for OGIS is:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
202-741-5770  
877-864-6448  
202-741-5769 (fax)  
ogis@nara.gov

Contacting the CIA's FOIA Public Liaison or OGIS does not affect your right to pursue an administrative appeal.

Sincerely,



Allison Fong  
Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosures

**TAB A**

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**OCI RECORD COPY**  
Please return to  
Presentation Staff



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Memorandum

COMMUNIST REACTIONS TO CERTAIN US ACTIONS

~~Top Secret~~  
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TS No. 199100/69  
17 April 1969

~~TOP SECRET~~  
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
17 April 1969

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Communist Reactions to Certain US Actions

1. The North Korean attack on the US EC-121 aircraft, like the seizure of the Pueblo, appears to have been a unilateral action taken without advance notice to either Moscow or Peking. This state of affairs will condition Soviet and Chinese Communist attitudes and reactions to US courses of action in this situation as it did in the Pueblo crisis. There is one major difference between these two incidents, however, that complicates the problem of developing effective US responses that would produce the desired impact on North Korea and its Communist neighbors. In contrast to the Pueblo affair, which contained elements susceptible to negotiation, the present situation does not lend itself to bargaining or exchange. Moreover, the possible objectives of US actions, apart from straightforward retaliation, involve the principles of maintaining the right to use international airspace and deterrence against future such hostilities. Neither principle is particularly applicable to the North Korean problem particularly in terms of securing specific responses by Pyongyang.

2. The problem of developing meaningful and effective US courses of action is also complicated

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of National Estimates and the Office of Strategic Research.

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by the assumptions and motivations underlying North Korea's action. The Kim Il-sung regime almost certainly planned this move in advance calculating that the potential advantages in taking this risk far outweighed the dangers of possible US military reprisals. This judgment, and North Korea's evaluation of future US initiatives, probably are strongly influenced by the Korean's interpretation of the US response to the seizure of the Pueblo. Kim Il-sung evidently has persuaded himself that the US is overextended in Vietnam and elsewhere and that North Korea therefore can engage in such deliberate acts of defiance with relative impunity. The North Koreans probably made the decision to attack the reconnaissance aircraft on the assumption that there would either be no US military response or at the most only a limited one, in the nature of a one-time retaliatory action.

3. We believe that two main factors contributed to North Korea's complacent appraisal of risks. Kim Il-sung's style of rule has long been characterized by a willingness to accept risks and by a strong reliance on bluff and intimidation. He has taken pride in his militant "revolutionary" stance and has ridiculed Peking and Moscow for their caution in dealing with US power. A major theme of North Korean propaganda, particularly since the Pueblo incident, is that a determined small nation can defeat a "mighty imperialist." A more specific motivation for the shootdown probably resides in Kim Il-sung's desire to offset the failure of his attempts over the past two years to launch a so-called "people's war" in the South and to undermine and disrupt the South Korean government and economy. Kim, moreover, evidently believes his long-term ambitions regarding South Korea require a high level of tension with the US. Periodic provocations, he

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hopes, will contribute to the disillusionment of the American public with overseas burdens and bring about a reduction and eventual withdrawal of US forces from South Korea.

4. In view of these North Korean assumptions and ambitions, it is doubtful that any of the US courses of action considered below would have any decisive or lasting effects, either in achieving stated US objectives or in inducing Pyongyang to modify its long-term policies. Embassy Seoul has suggested that if the US response takes the form of a military threat or even a limited strike, "the benefits to North Korea will be manifold." A very tough populace will be spurred to greater feats of production and sacrifice, and the disputes within the North Korean leadership that have been hinted at in recent pronouncements may be stilled in the face of tangible external pressure. Such gains for the regime, in the Embassy's judgment, would outweigh the physical losses anticipated from a limited US retaliatory strike.

5. Show of force: The North Koreans probably would view actions such as demonstrative air and naval maneuvers in proximity to North Korea essentially as a repetition of the US response to the Pueblo seizure. They would be inclined to interpret such demonstrations as indicating US unwillingness to resort to any direct application of force that might carry high risks of a resumption of major hostilities. The North Koreans would attempt to extract maximum propaganda advantage from a show of force in the Military Armistice Commission forum and elsewhere. It is unlikely, however, that they would feel compelled to challenge this US air and naval presence by direct air or surface action.

6. Military actions not involving combat probably would not deter the North Koreans from increasing

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harassment and other forms of pressure in the Demilitarized Zone area. In fact, they might view an intensification of such pressure as an effective means of stimulating international concern over the danger of major hostilities, thus bringing heavy pressure to bear on the US to withdraw the show of force. We believe that there is little prospect that this course of action would induce the North Koreans to apologize publicly for the shootdown or undertake to avoid such actions in the future.

7. Military Combat Options:

We believe it is unlikely that any of these actions would accomplish the objectives of future deterrence or maintenance of the right to use international airspace. The North Koreans would use all the capabilities at their command to inflict maximum losses on any US strike forces. They would respond with virulent propaganda attacks and would mobilize the limited diplomatic assets available to them to discredit the US action and build pressure for its prompt termination. We do not believe, however, that the North Koreans would undertake major retaliatory military actions against US/South Korean military targets or civilian facilities in the South, although we cannot exclude the possibility that they might attack a target of opportunity, such as a US naval unit engaged in hostile action against North Korea.

8. Pyongyang's initial reaction probably would be to play for time in which to assess the nature of US intentions. They would seek to engage the US in protracted talks in the MAC, partly as a device to forestall further and more dangerous US reprisals and partly to exploit that forum for attracting international sympathy and support.

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9. Further clues as to North Korea's probable reaction to US combat options are provided by its behavior in the weeks immediately following the Pueblo seizure. There was a significant decline in North Korean harassment activities in the DMZ area until the late spring of 1968. A captured member of the large North Korean infiltration team that landed on South Korea's east coast last November has testified that a major seaborne infiltration operation originally scheduled for February 1968 was canceled after the seizure of the Pueblo in late January.

The USSR

10. Soviet reactions to US moves short of combat-type actions would probably be similar to those immediately after the Pueblo incident, when Soviet policy was aimed at limiting the scale of US reaction and providing strong verbal support to North Korea while keeping clear of involvement in the crisis. Moscow would probably react to US actions with some purposefully visible military preparations at the upper end of the noncombat scale, in large part because it could not be certain the US did not intend to apply direct force. We believe the USSR would be extremely careful, however, to avoid involvement with US reconnaissance aircraft and would limit itself to shadowing a US naval show of force in the Sea of Japan. If Moscow concluded that this was the extent of the US reaction, it would probably be satisfied to confine its response to a stream of propaganda abuse.

11. Soviet reaction to US combat actions would, of course, be stronger. The nature and extent of the reaction would depend largely on what type of move the US made and especially on whether or not the Soviets felt it was a one-shot action or one of a series of moves which would ultimately threaten the existence of the North Korean regime. The Soviets would probably be skeptical of any US assurances that no further actions were contemplated, but their desire to avoid involvement would probably induce them to adopt a wait-and-see attitude.

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12. If US actions included the sinking of a North Korean patrol craft or the downing of an aircraft outside Korean territory, Moscow could be expected to denounce the US and press for United Nations actions condemning the US and demanding that it terminate such actions. Moscow might also feel compelled to announce through Red Star or some similar medium the increased combat readiness of Soviet Far Eastern forces and to make much of the fact that the US actions occurred in proximity to Soviet borders. This would be calculated to impress on the US the seriousness of Moscow's concern and to deter further US actions.

13. Raids in force across the DMZ or similar measures that threatened to lead to major hostilities would doubtless call for a stronger Soviet response. Moscow would probably feel it necessary to augment naval and air units in the Sea of Japan and would certainly increase its military readiness. The Soviets might well provide equipment to North Korea on a crash basis as a demonstration of their commitment to the mutual assistance treaty. Moscow, however, probably would accompany such measures with counsels of restraint to the North Koreans, although the effectiveness of Soviet influence would be questionable.

14. An action of longer duration, such as a naval blockade or mining of ports, would create the greatest possibility of a US-Soviet confrontation. Moscow would certainly feel such actions so close to its borders would call for a significant demonstration of military preparedness and strength in the area. The Soviets would probably interpret such moves as a challenge to themselves as well as to the Koreans. We think Moscow would still attempt to avoid a military confrontation, but in view of increased Soviet presence in the area, the risk of unintended or accidental US-Soviet clashes would be increased even if the Russians made no attempt to challenge a blockade directly.

#### Communist China

15. Peking's reaction to noncombat military actions probably would closely follow the lines set in China's cautious treatment of the Pueblo affair.

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In view of the strained relations between Peking and Pyongyang, the Chinese would have little incentive to provide more than a routine verbal display of support for North Korea and denunciation of the US. Noncombat US actions probably would be interpreted by Peking as confirming its over-all view of US policy, particularly its conviction that the US is unwilling to face the risks of major military escalation in either Korea or Vietnam.

16. US combat type actions would reinforce Peking's extreme caution. The Chinese leaders almost certainly would not feel bound by their treaty with North Korea to undertake a military response and they probably would even be reluctant to provide more than token military assistance. There is no reason to believe that the Chinese would be any less determined to avoid a direct military confrontation with the US in this situation than they were in the Pueblo crisis. Peking, of course, would be alert to exploit any signs of North Korean dissatisfaction with Moscow's reaction and support and an opening of this kind might result in more generous material assistance than the Chinese would otherwise be disposed to provide.

#### North Vietnam

17. The Hanoi leaders probably would have ambivalent feelings regarding the implications of US actions in Korea. Hanoi radio quickly praised the North Koreans for their "glorious achievement" in downing the US aircraft. The North Vietnamese probably would interpret a noncombat response as further evidence for their long-cherished conviction that the US is overextended in Vietnam and cannot contemplate a wider conflict. They would also hope that the Korean incident would further fuel the fires of American public discontent with the Vietnam war. On the other hand, Hanoi is very sensitive to the danger that North Korean provocations might precipitate a vigorous US military reaction that would have the effect of deflecting public attention from the Vietnam struggle and enable the US administration to adopt a more demanding military and negotiating posture.

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### South Korea

18. The Seoul government probably would display the same frustration and uneasiness regarding noncombat actions that marked its reaction to the US handling of the Pueblo crisis. Any public expression of this dissatisfaction, however, would be tempered by Seoul's recognition that one of Pyongyang's major objectives is to shake South Korean confidence in US protection and to drive a wedge between South Korea and the US. Combat-type actions, on the other hand, would be warmly welcomed by Seoul as evidence of a major change in the US attitude toward North Korean pressure and provocations. South Korea might press the US to go beyond these measures and undertake at least a limited joint ground assault across the DMZ aimed at inflicting a highly damaging military and political defeat.

### General World Reaction

19. As in the case of the Pueblo, the great majority of nations and governments will regard this aircraft incident as largely irrelevant to their interests and security. They will discern no major international principle which requires them to become involved in any significant way. Their main preoccupation will be the danger of some chain of events that might lead to a confrontation between the US and the USSR.

20. Most American allies in West Europe would be prepared to provide public support for any US diplomatic initiatives, on the ground that the North Koreans had violated international law, but they would be alarmed at any move toward military retaliation for what they regard as a relatively minor episode in the cold war. They would avoid association with the use or the threat of force and might try to bring pressure to bear on the US if they judged such US action to be imminent.

21. In general, Latin American opinion would follow that of Western Europe. Most of these nations would be willing to support the US up to a point, but to them, the shoot-down and its possible

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consequences would seem remote from their interests and security. Most nations in Africa and in non-Communist Asia would tend to adopt a plague-on-both-houses attitude, and their double-standard neutralism would tend to make them view US reprisals as a form of "colonial" pressure. Nationalist China, South Vietnam and Thailand, of course, would voice support for the US in varying degrees of firmness. Japan would be extremely sensitive to any use of homeland or Okinawan bases as staging areas for US retaliatory action. Japanese leftists have already tried to embarrass the Sato government on these issues. The Japanese leadership would be deeply concerned about possible adverse effects of US actions regarding Korea on the sensitive questions of Okinawan reversion and extension of the US-Japan security treaty.

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**TAB B**

## **Explanation of Exemptions**

### **Freedom of Information Act:**

- (b)(1) exempts from disclosure information currently and properly classified, pursuant to an Executive Order;
- (b)(2) exempts from disclosure information which pertains solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the Agency;
- (b)(3) exempts from disclosure information that another federal statute protects, provided that the other federal statute either requires that the matters be withheld, or establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld. The (b)(3) statutes upon which the CIA relies include, but are not limited to, the CIA Act of 1949;
- (b)(4) exempts from disclosure trade secrets and commercial or financial information that is obtained from a person and that is privileged or confidential;
- (b)(5) exempts from disclosure inter-and intra-agency memoranda or letters that would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;
- (b)(6) exempts from disclosure information from personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy;
- (b)(7) exempts from disclosure information compiled for law enforcement purposes to the extent that the production of the information (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings; (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication; (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source or, in the case of information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source ; (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger any individual's life or physical safety;
- (b)(8) exempts from disclosure information contained in reports or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, or on behalf of, or for use of an agency responsible for regulating or supervising financial institutions; and
- (b)(9) exempts from disclosure geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

**April 2012**

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COMBINED WATCH REPORT  
of the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

No. 973

17 April 1969  
(As of 1030 EST)CONCLUSIONS

NR Record

North Korea.

We have seen no indications that the North Korean shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft was a prelude to initiation of hostilities.

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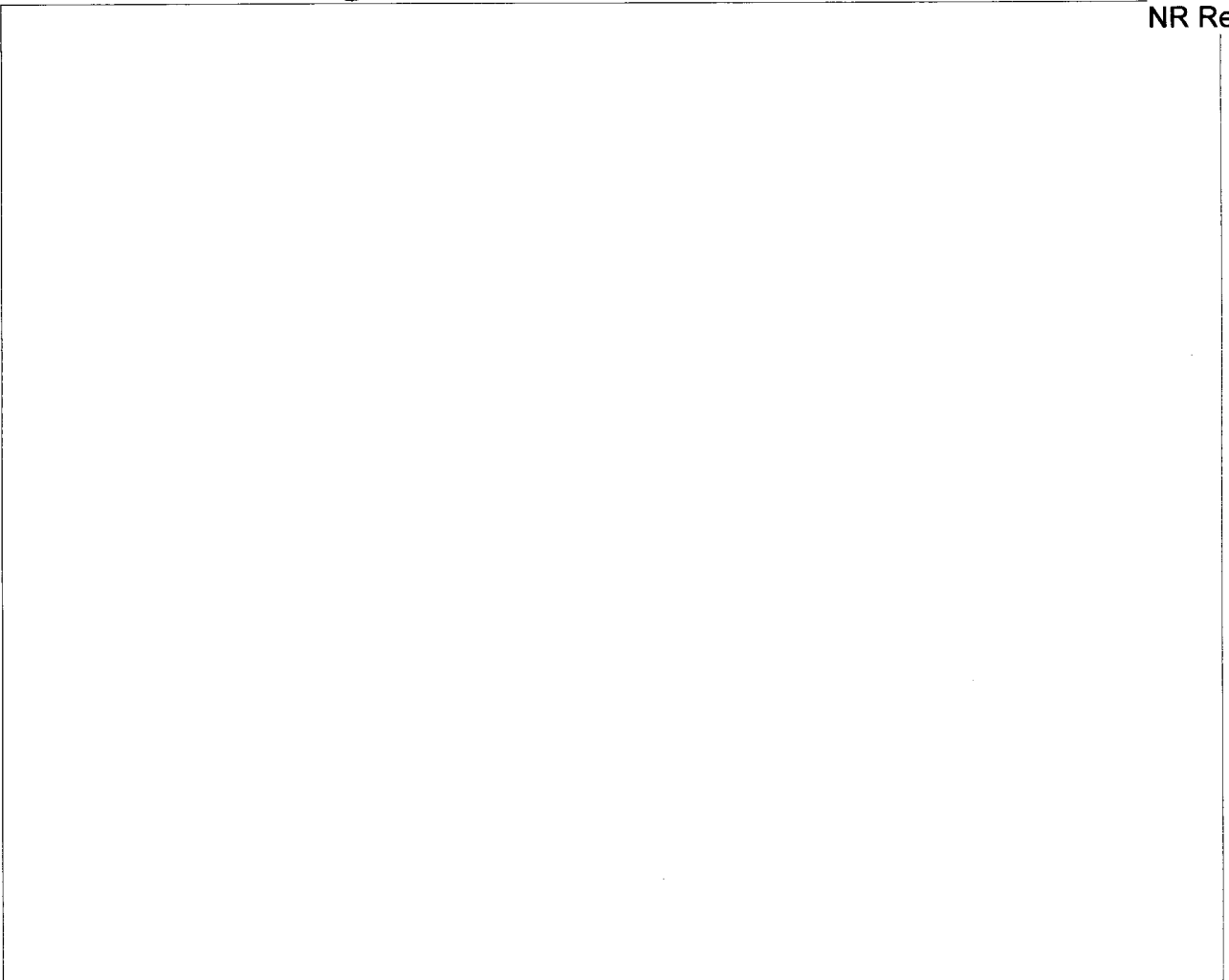


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17 April 1969

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NR Record



V. North Korea

North Korea's willingness and capability to react aggressively to US peripheral reconnaissance beyond its territorial limits was demonstrated again on 15 April in the shootdown of a US Navy EC-121M reconnaissance aircraft 80-90 miles from the North Korean coast over the Sea of Japan. Previous instances of such aggressive reaction were the capture of USS PUEBLO in January 1968 and an April 1965 attack on a US reconnaissance aircraft about 45 miles from the east coast. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] we have no evidence that North Korean military forces are preparing [REDACTED] for major offensive operations. [REDACTED]

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## *The President's Daily Brief*

14 April 1969  
(Afternoon)

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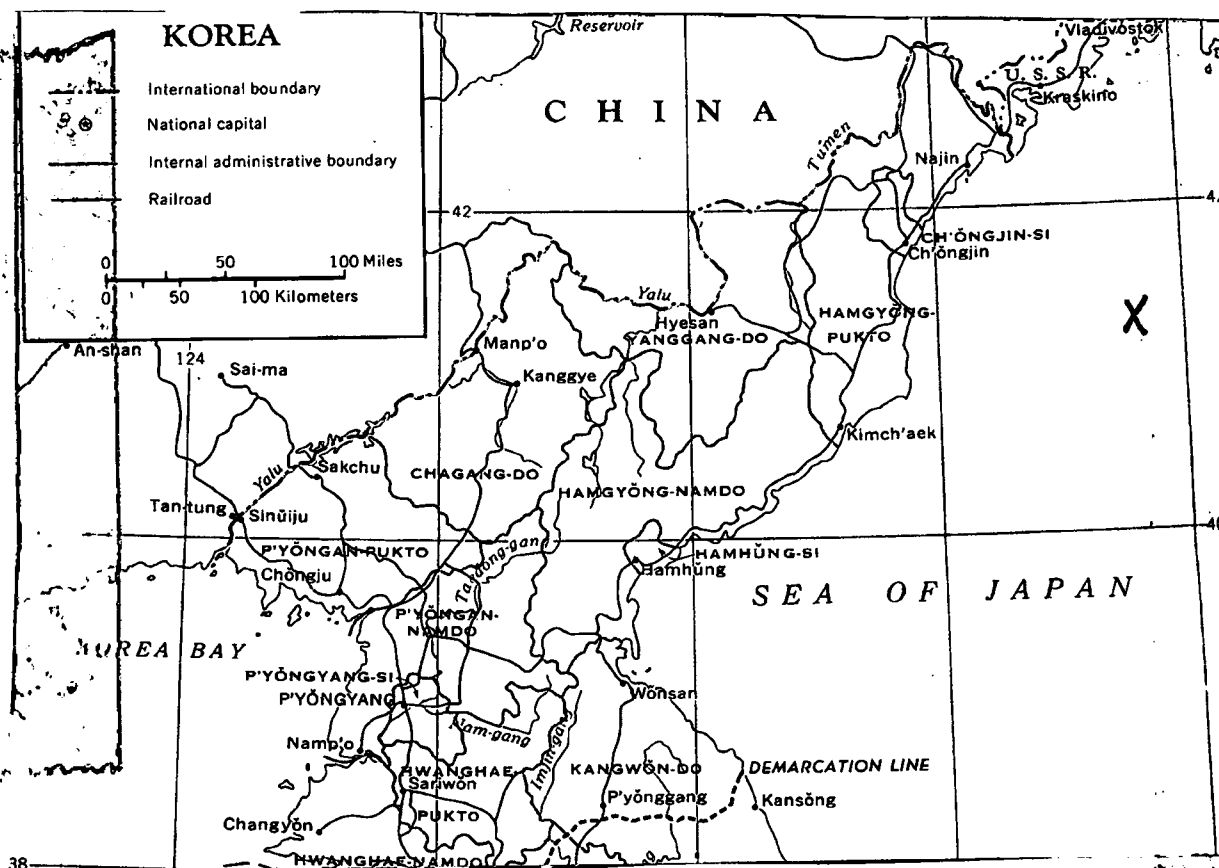
LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF  
14 APRIL 1969

NR Record

## II. OTHER MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

Rescue operations have been launched, but, as yet, there is no word on the fate of the 31 crewmen aboard the aircraft.



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY







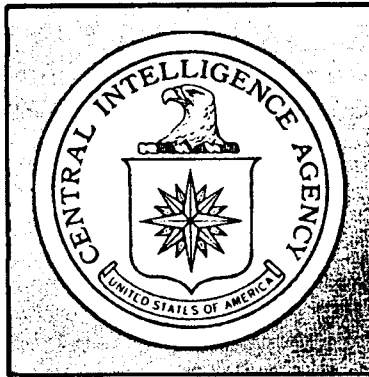








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# *The President's Daily Brief*

16 April 1969

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## FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NR Record

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

The destroyer USS Tucker confirms it has picked up two bodies in debris 17 miles from the crash site of the EC-121 plane. [REDACTED]

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The North Korean Defense Minister General Choi Hyun, apparently talking to the officers and men of the North Korean army unit responsible for the shootdown, thanked them for their action and was quoted as saying that the flight was part of planned preparations for "inciting a new war in Korea. ... the situation remains tense and it shows that a war may break out again at any moment." The speech appears to be part of the North Korean effort [REDACTED] to keep its units alert to any military reaction from either the US or South Korea. [REDACTED]

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(b)(3)

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A Chinese Communist newspaper in Hong Kong bitterly attacked the "despicable Russian revisionists for shamelessly and brazenly selling out North Korea by sending two warships to help the Americans find the bits and pieces of the marauding plane. ...the Russian action would be acceptable if this were a civilian plane and not a military intruder." (AP 283, 17 Apr)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY









*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

North Korean military activity since the shootdown has been cautious. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] No movement of North Korean forces has been detected, however, nor has there been any aircraft activity in reaction to the search.

The South Koreans are showing some concern over US resolve in dealing with North Korean attacks and the latest incident is being cited as evidence that South Korea needs more US military assistance. Calls for retaliation also continue to be heard in Seoul.

In Tokyo, opponents of the US-Japan security treaty are trying to use the incident to exploit Japanese fears of becoming involved in a Korean conflict. Both the Socialists and the Communists are stressing that the aircraft was from a US base in Japan. Foreign Minister Aichi was hit by a barrage of opposition questions in the Diet today.

For its part, Moscow remains noncommittal in its press coverage, although it obviously does not mind any inferences Pyongyang may care to read into the participation of Soviet naval units in the search.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*



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# *The President's Daily Brief*

*17 April 1969*

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## FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NR Record

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

At today's Military Armistice Commission meeting, the statement of the senior North Korean representative dealt only with charges of DMZ violations and made no mention of the aircraft shootdown. When the UN Command member, General Knapp, made his protest, the North Korean asked to what unit the plane had been attached. After this question was reiterated, General Knapp walked out. [REDACTED]

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The Soviet destroyer Vdokhnovennyy, rendezvousing with the USS Tucker, this morning turned over a number of items of clothing and equipment recovered from the downed aircraft. [REDACTED]

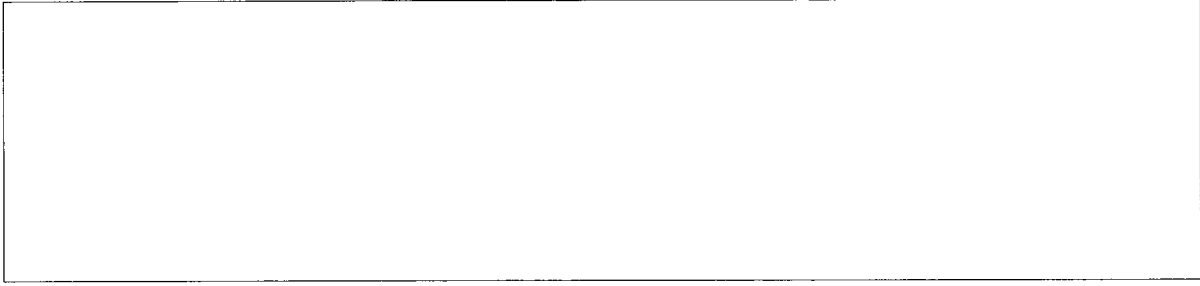
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*







*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

The South Korean Government seems anxious not to get too far ahead of the US position on the shootdown. In a relatively moderate statement the government today condemned the "outrageous, illegal, barbaric" North Korean action and called on the "US and free world...to take prompt and effective countermeasures to prevent once and for all the Northern puppets from playing with fire and provoking war." The statement avoided any demand for immediate military retaliation and only asserted that North Korea's leaders "should receive due punishment for the crime they committed." In contrast to official caution, the press is continuing to call for immediate retaliation.

Japanese Prime Minister Sato publicly censured Pyongyang in the Diet today. He said that the North Korean action should be "internationally condemned." Sato, however, expressed a hope that the US would take a cautious attitude and that the incident would not develop into any further conflict. This clear preference for US restraint, which underlies popular attitudes toward the incident, has also been reflected in commentary by Foreign Minister Aichi, Japanese defense officials, and in the news media. Sato also implied a concern that US retaliation might affect the progress of negotiations on the return of Okinawa to Japanese administration.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*



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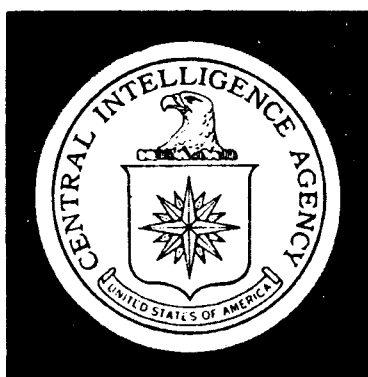








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# *The President's Daily Brief*

18 April 1969

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

19 April 1969

LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF  
18 APRIL 1969

NR Record

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

## KOREA

The North Koreans have not yet commented directly on President Nixon's announcement that reconnaissance flights will be resumed with adequate protection. A Pyongyang domestic broadcast last night, however, pledged that the Korean people "will in the future, too, mete out severe punishment to aggressors who infringe upon the sovereignty of our country."

We have observed no indications that North Korean forces are preparing for offensive action.

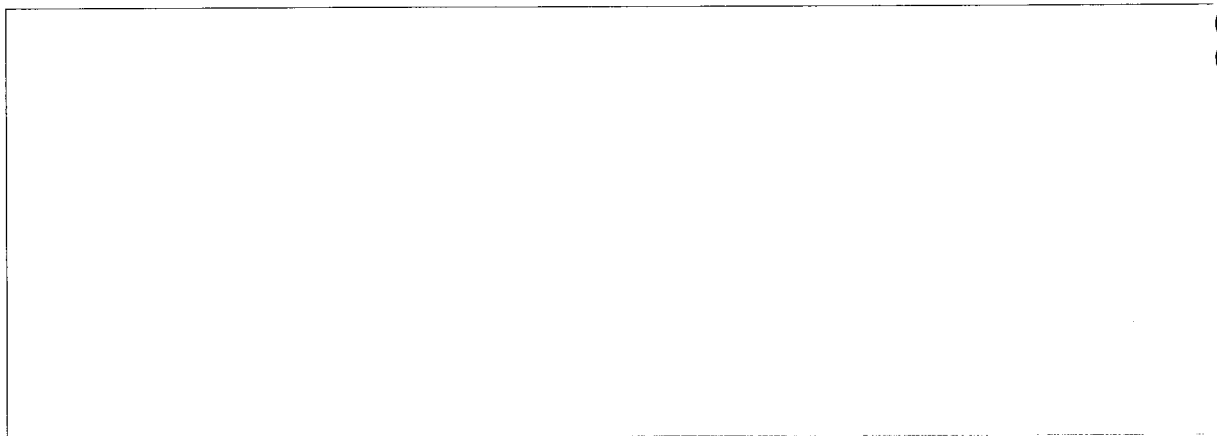
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(Central Intelligence Bulletin, 19 Apr)

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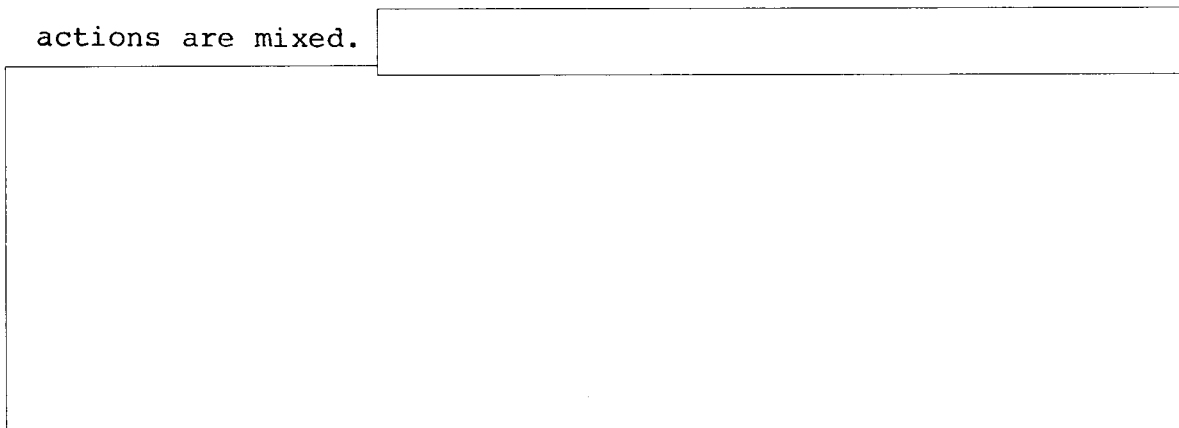
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South Korea has not yet commented officially on the President's press conference, but the first unofficial reactions are mixed.

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(Central Intelli-

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gence Bulletin, 19 Apr)

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*















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# *The President's Daily Brief*

22 April 1969

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NR Record



*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

23 April 1969

LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF  
22 APRIL 1969

NR Record

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

NR Record

*KOREA*

The North Korean government today issued a statement on the EC-121 incident. The complete text is not yet in, but the summary would indicate an accusation that the US infiltration into North Korean air space by a "large-size reconnaissance plane" was raising a "new war clamor." The statement adds,

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

"Our counterattack and self-defense measures...are a legitimate exercise of sovereignty...which fully conforms to international law." (FBIS 17, 19, 20, 21, etc.)

Preliminary reports indicate that a North Korean guard post this morning fired an estimated 30 rounds of recoilless rifle fire and 300 rounds of machine gun fire across the DMZ at a position manned by troops of the South Korean 7th Division who returned the fire. The fight lasted 35 minutes and no casualties were reported.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

NR Record





NR Record







*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

NR Record

## KOREA

Peking yesterday broke its week-old silence over the shootdown in an official news release attacking Moscow's "collusion" with the US after the incident. While denouncing the Soviets' assistance and cooperation during the past week as "active service provided to US imperialism," the article cited a "news report" source stating that the US plane "intruded" into North Korean airspace. The dispatch made no mention of who shot down the plane and managed to avoid any direct expression of support for North Korea's action.

Peking's statement contrasts with its announcement last year concerning the seizure of the Pueblo which promised China's "firm support" for Pyongyang's "just stand."

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

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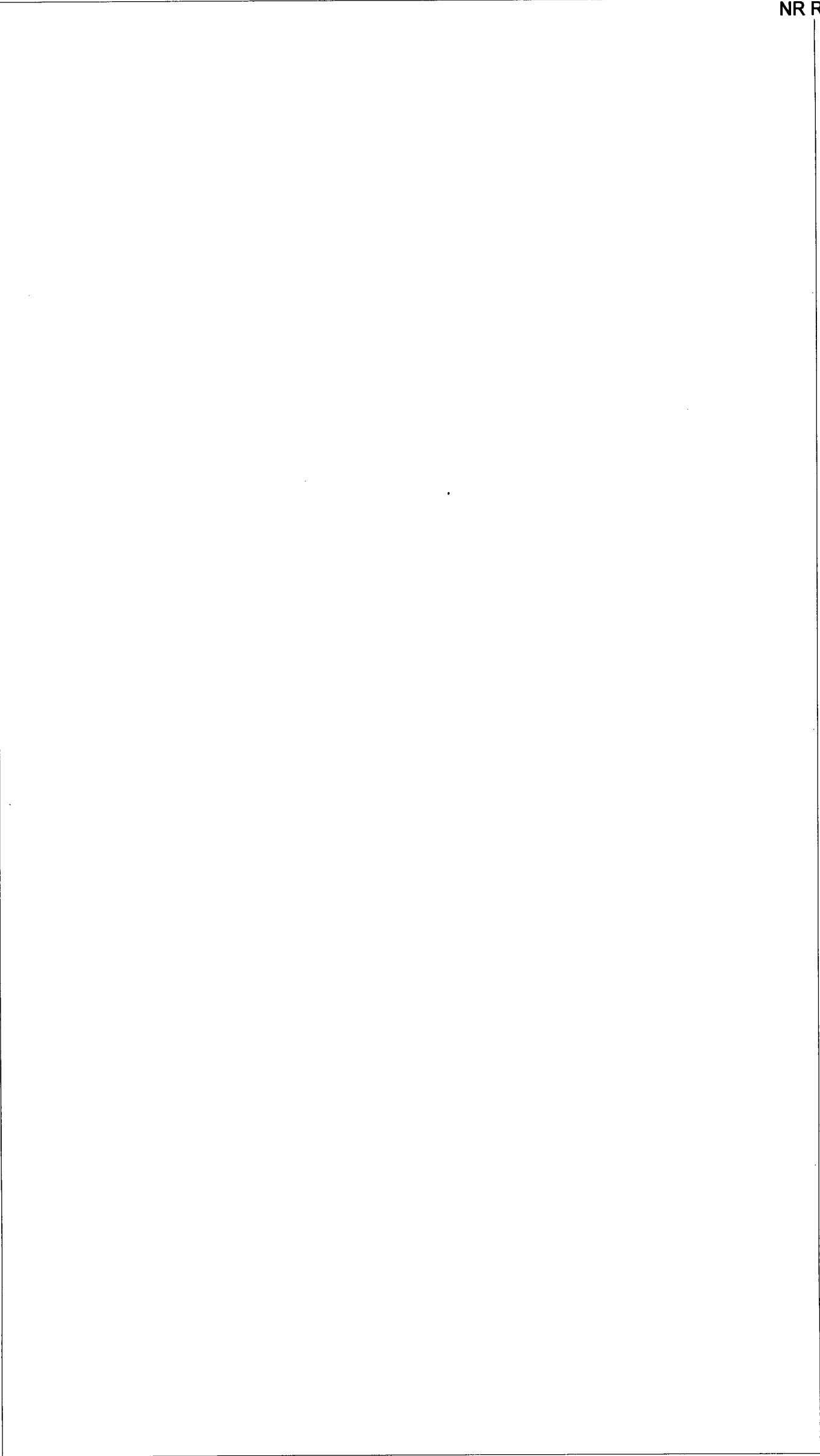
# *The President's Daily Brief*

23 April 1969

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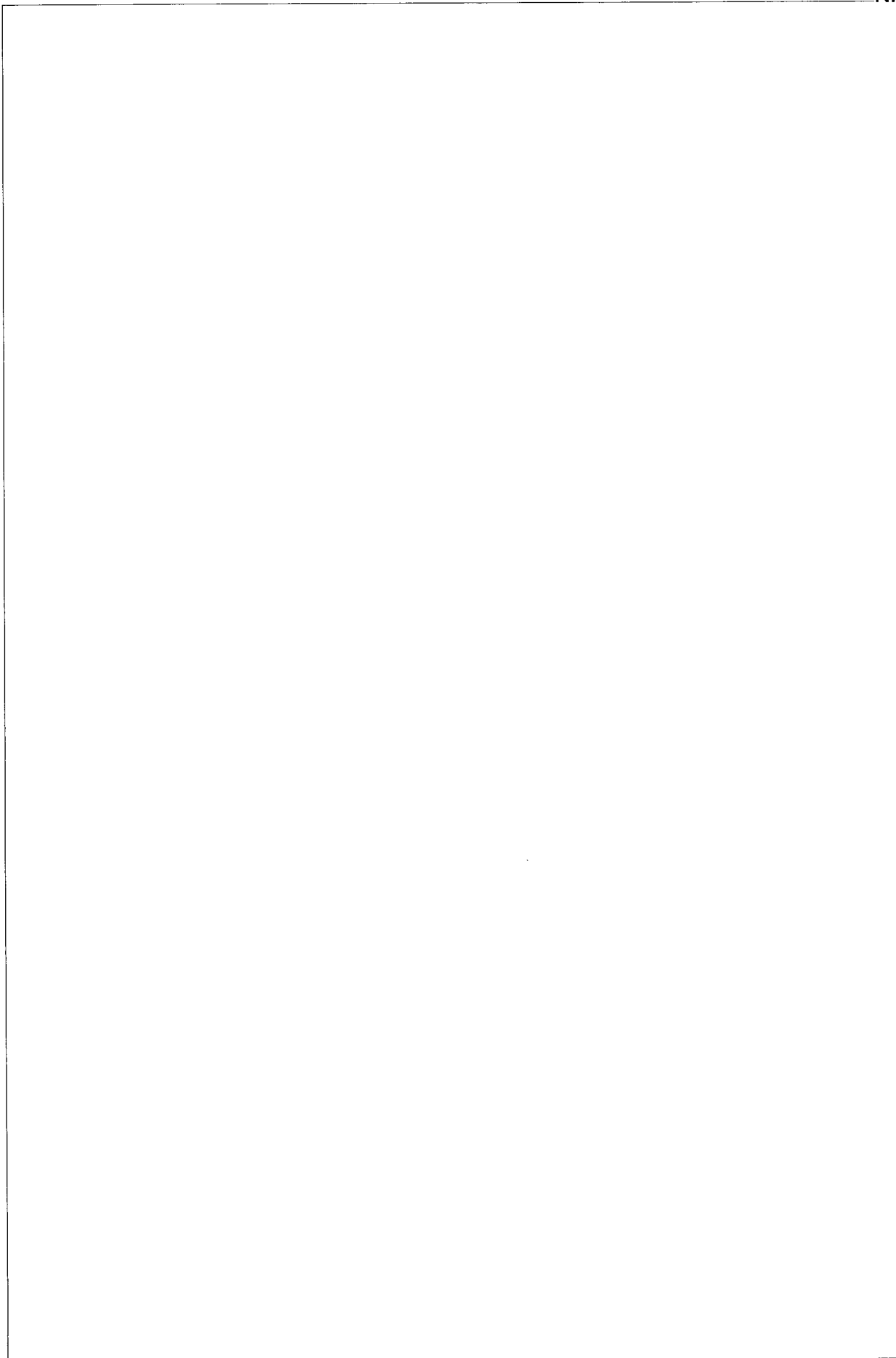


*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

24 April 1969

LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF  
23 APRIL 1969

NR Record



*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*









*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

NR Record

## KOREA

Examination of the full text of Pyongyang's first official statement on the EC-121 incident shows a generally cautious and defensive stance. The North Koreans clearly have been playing for time in which to assess US intentions. The defensive tone of the statement suggests that North Korean leaders are well aware of their weak international position and are fully conscious of the hazards in any further military provocations on their part.

The North Koreans make an attempt to link the EC-121 with the Pueblo affair, but the weakness of their case is evident in their failure to cite a precise location for the

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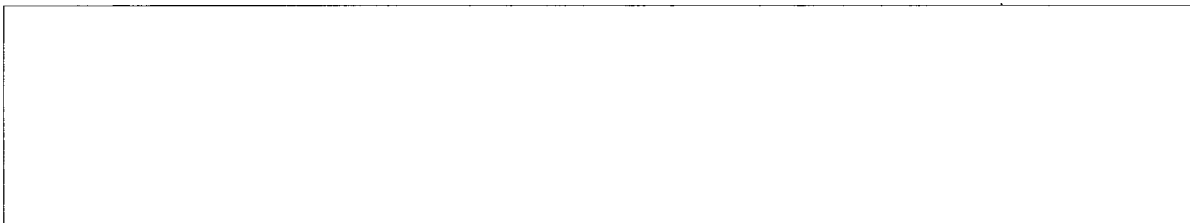
alleged intrusion of the US plane. The omission of details contrasts with the elaborate attempt to "document" the Pueblo's violation of North Korean waters.

In an obvious attempt to play on foreign uneasiness regarding US intentions, the statement claims there is no "guarantee" that US flights "will not intrude again." The statement further seeks to cast doubt on US intentions by warning that the US will exploit any North Korean defensive reaction as a pretext to "commit full-scale attack" which may lead to another "total war" in Korea.

The general posture and deployment of North Korean forces and air defense units is consistent with a decision to lie low for the time being.

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Seoul appears to be trying to keep in step with the US.



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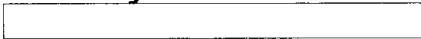
DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# Intelligence Memorandum

*North Korean Political Strategy*

~~Top Secret~~

8 August 1969



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
8 August 1969

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

North Korean Political Strategy

Introduction

Aggressive actions of the North Korean regime toward South Korea and the United States--exemplified by the capture of the Pueblo in January 1968 and the destruction of the EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft in April 1969--have been the subject of a number of National Intelligence Estimates and intelligence memoranda over the past two years. This latest study examines possible underlying considerations behind the present North Korean policy as they emerged from the changing strategic balance on the Korean peninsula and in Southeast Asia during the 1960s. The possibility of future belligerent actions by the North Koreans is discussed in the Outlook section of the study, paragraphs 15-21.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Office of National Estimates.

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### Background

1. The seizure of the Pueblo in January 1968 and the attack on the US EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft in April 1969 were acts of political warfare. They form a key element of Premier Kim Il-song's strategy for advancing three major objectives: in the North to solidify further his political position and to stir the population to greater economic efforts; in the South to undermine confidence in the government and to exacerbate its relations with the US; in relationship to the US, to capitalize on the US public's disenchantment with the burdens and risks of military commitments in Asia and ultimately to force a retrenchment in American commitments, particularly the withdrawal of US forces from Korea.

2. Kim Il-song has been quoted as saying, "The Vietnam war is crucial. The defeat of the United States in Vietnam will mark the end of American power in Asia." Kim's view closely parallels Maoist China's evident conviction that the Vietnamese Communists must impose a defeat on US policy that would force the US to retract its power and commitments in East Asia. This, they believe, would remove the principal barrier to the achievement of Chinese aspirations in Southeast Asia and to North Korean objectives in the South.

### North Korean Pressure Tactics

3. The eagerness with which Kim Il-song has attempted to exploit the US involvement in Vietnam stems partly from North Korea's increasingly bleak prospects in competing with South Korea. Prior to the military coup in South Korea in May 1961, Pyongyang relied on propaganda and political subversion against the South and a high economic growth rate in the North to set the stage for eventual unification of the peninsula under a Communist regime. Time appeared to be on the side of the North as South Korea muddled through one political and economic crisis after another. But throughout the 1960s, the South under President Pak's leadership

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has outpaced the North in terms of both international standing and economic growth. The South's rate of economic growth has been double that of the North for most of the past decade; it is now increasing almost three times as fast. There is little prospect that the North can unaided revive its lagging economy and avoid falling even further behind.

4. South Korea's normalization treaty with Japan in 1965 also represented a major setback for the North. Pyongyang's efforts to forestall and discredit this agreement underscored its fear that the treaty, which provided for \$800 million in Japanese economic assistance over a ten-year period, would lead to the re-establishment of strong Japanese influence in the South and would erect another formidable barrier to North Korea's long-term aim of extending its control over the entire peninsula.

5. Another reflection of Kim's decision that bold action was necessary to check South Korea's growing momentum and power was his abandonment of earlier proposals for the "peaceful reunification" of the country based on "democratic" elections. He has publicly set the goal of achieving unification "within our generation." In his October 1966 speech, Kim outlined a program for achieving this goal by stimulating a revolution of "patriotic forces" in the South which would unite with the North to expel US forces, overthrow the Seoul government, and establish a "peoples' government." He called for the development of a militant Communist party in the South to lead the revolution and to spearhead a broad anti-US "national salvation front."

6. Kim has acknowledged that North Korea has no prospect of achieving unification as long as US forces remain in the South. The "supreme national task" facing the Korean people, he has declared, is to "drive the US imperialist aggressors from our soil" and to overthrow their "stooges" in Seoul. Until this task is accomplished, unification is "unthinkable."

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North Korean Reaction to US Intervention in Vietnam

7. Kim responded quickly to the opening he perceived in the initiation of US air strikes against North Vietnam in February 1965 and the landing of the first US combat forces the following month. In late March 1965, after South Korean noncombatants arrived in South Vietnam, the North Korean Government offered to send "volunteers" whenever the Vietnamese Communists requested them and followed this with offers of arms and equipment. [REDACTED]

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The Pueblo Incident

10. As the US became even more heavily engaged in Vietnam, Kim evidently decided that he could stage

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more risky provocations with relative impunity. The Blue House raid and the seizure of the Pueblo followed. The North Koreans clearly calculated that their possession of the Pueblo and its crew would exert an additional powerful deterrent against retaliatory action. Pyongyang took pains to draw attention to its leverage by threatening to try and punish the Pueblo crew.

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13. The overriding aims of humiliating the US, generating public opposition in the US to American military activities in the Korean area, and obtaining visible evidence for the Korean people of "victory" over the US guided Pyongyang to press for a formal US apology throughout the eleven-month period of negotiations. After the release of the Pueblo crew, the North Koreans portrayed the document signed by the US representative as a "confession" of guilt, claimed that

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North Korea had proved that a determined small nation could defeat a "mighty imperialist," and compared the US "humiliation" in the Pueblo affair to the "abject surrender" of the UN Command in the 1953 Korean armistice.

#### The EC-121 Incident

14. From the standpoint of advancing North Korean objectives against the US, the outcome of the EC-121 incident was a major disappointment for the Pyongyang regime. In contrast with the Pueblo affair, the initial uncertainty in international opinion about the location of the shootdown was quickly dispelled by the US and Soviet search operations 90 miles from the Korean coast and by President Nixon's announcement that both North Korean and Soviet radar tracking confirmed that the aircraft had never been closer than 40 miles to North Korean territory.

15. Pyongyang never overcame this inauspicious beginning. Its propaganda media devoted unusually light coverage to the incident, and much of this was geared to supporting domestic goals of the regime. The government withheld a formal pronouncement until five days after President Nixon had announced the resumption of reconnaissance flights under protection. The defensive tone of Pyongyang's statement indicated that the regime was well aware of its weak international position. It made a feeble attempt to link the EC-121 with the Pueblo and to arouse opposition to US activities by claiming there was no "guarantee" that continuing US reconnaissance flights "will not intrude again." Aside from a North Vietnamese expression of support and lukewarm, pro forma Soviet support, North Korea's isolation was complete. It was forced to resort to private appeals to its allies and friends abroad for some gestures of support.

16. North Korea's eight-day delay in issuing a formal statement on the EC-121 incident apparently was prompted not only by the regime's awareness of its vulnerable propaganda position but also by a

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desire to play for time in which to assess US intentions in deploying Task Force 71 to the Sea of Japan.

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### Outlook

17. Kim Il-song's taste for risky ventures is sometimes attributed to wishful thinking and delusions of grandeur as a revolutionary leader. But these personal characteristics, however important, probably are less influential in shaping his decisions than the hard and unpromising facts of North Korea's objective situation and Kim's perception of opportunities to alter these conditions to his advantage. The North Korean Government is not only losing ground in the contest for power and prestige to an increasingly prosperous South Korea, but lacking any firm assurance of military protection and direct support in crisis situations from the USSR and China--support that would counterbalance the US role in the South--it confronts a highly uncertain future.

18. There is little prospect that Kim will abandon the political strategy that produced the Pueblo and EC-121 incidents. From Pyongyang's vantage point, neither the urgent pressures of competing with the South nor exploitable opportunities abroad have diminished. Even if the next year or so should witness a settlement in Vietnam or substantial reductions in the level of combat and the number of US forces involved, it is unlikely that such developments in themselves would bring a marked shift in North Korea's present policy. Much would depend on Kim's interpretation of the outcome in Vietnam, particularly its bearing on future American military posture and intentions throughout East Asia.

19. There are additional factors, both domestic and foreign, that will probably encourage Kim to persist in his tactics against South Korea and

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the US. In the first place, Kim's deep personal commitment to a program of maximum military preparedness, described as "fortification of the whole country," and to the goal of reunification "within our generation" has generated a powerful momentum across the entire range of North Korean policies. A series of purges of high-ranking opponents of this course over the past two years has reinforced Kim's commitment. His public demands for unquestioning and unconditional acceptance of his decisions and constant agitation to instill militant discipline in the population will make it difficult for Kim to reverse course over a short period of time. In addition, Kim Il-song, like Mao, relies heavily on the domestic tension and hatred generated by an "aggressive US imperialism" to motivate his people and to keep a social revolution alive in a nation where ancient attitudes die hard. Such tension and hatred must be fed periodically by fresh "evidence."

20. The political crisis in the South over amending the constitution to permit President Pak to run for a third term will be a strong incentive for the North Koreans to intensify infiltration and subversive operations. They may be tempted to exaggerate the opportunities for disruption presented by recent student demonstrations in Seoul protesting the third-term amendment. It was the students, after all, who spearheaded the drive to overthrow the Syngman Rhee regime in 1960.

21. Pyongyang, however, faces a dilemma in trying to exploit South Korean political unrest. A sharp upsurge in pressure and subversion would not only invite harsh repressive action by the Seoul government but would impair the North's ability to take advantage of the sentiment for early reunification among student and intellectual groups in the South. Such action could, indeed, backfire and improve Pak's third-term prospects. The great majority of South Koreans could well regard a sharp rise in the threat from the North as a compelling argument for keeping Pak in office.

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22. The limitations on the North's ability to intervene effectively in South Korean politics, combined with its poor chances for developing guerrilla bases and significant political support in the countryside, may prompt Pyongyang to concentrate its main attention on harassing actions against the US presence and attempting to shake South Korean confidence in US protection. In addition to further attacks on US ships or aircraft that may offer targets of opportunity, the North Koreans may attempt provocations against US personnel and installations in the South.

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The significant decrease in incidents along the DMZ so far this year, however, suggests that Kim has opted for restraint in the hope that without fresh evidence of an outside threat, the South Korean people will open the way for subversion as they wrestle with the third-term issue.

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

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42

18 April 1969  
No. 0366/69

70

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The WEEKLY SUMMARY, issued every Friday morning by the Office of Current Intelligence, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Directorate of Science and Technology. Topics requiring more comprehensive treatment and therefore published separately as Special Reports are listed in the contents pages.

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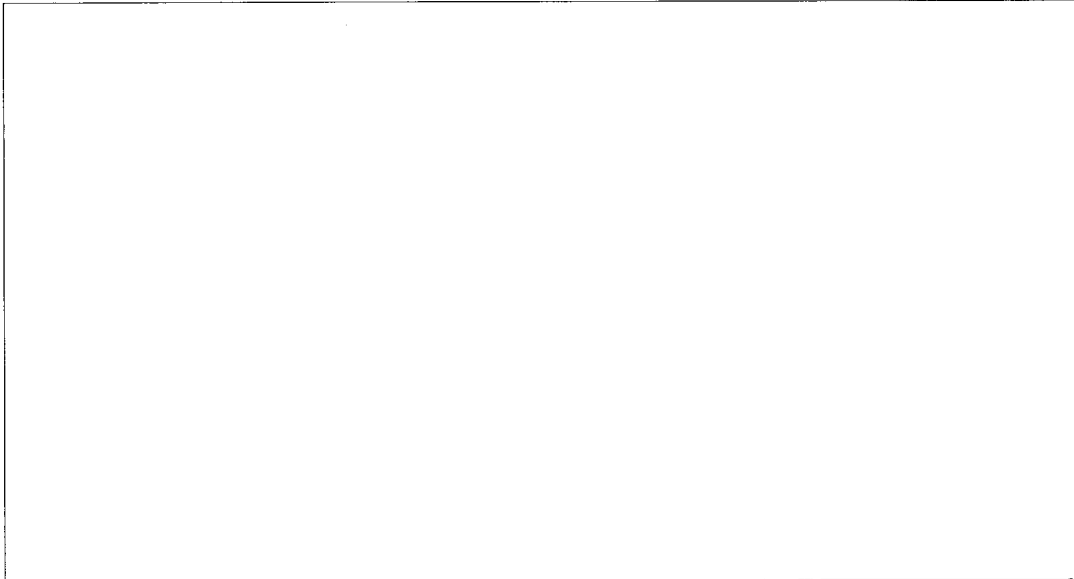
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## C O N T E N T S

(Information as of noon EST, 17 April 1969)

Far EastPage

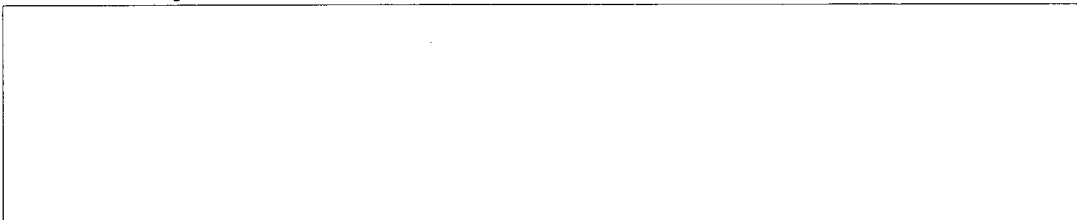
NR Record



## HARD-LINE NORTH KOREANS REVIVE TENSION WITH US

7

North Korea's shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft over the Sea of Japan has all the earmarks of a deliberate action designed to revive an atmosphere of high tension with the US.



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## FAR EAST

The North Korean shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft over international waters appears to have been a deliberate action designed to revive a high level of tension with the US. In light of its experience in the Pueblo affair, the Kim Il-song regime apparently saw a relatively low-risk opportunity to score another propaganda triumph that would offset the failure of its pressure campaign against South Korea. North Korea's immediate call for a Military Armistice Commission meeting probably was intended to forestall US retaliation and to provide a propaganda forum for further charges of US aggression.

South Korean reaction to the incident has indicated an immediate concern over US resolve to deal firmly with North Korean attacks. In Japan, on the other hand, concern has been expressed that Japan might become embroiled in a Korean conflict.

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In South Vietnam, main force Communist units continue to refit in sanctuary and border base areas. The enemy has, however, sought to cover his general disengagement by launching a few heavy attacks against outlying targets. In Paris, meanwhile, the Vietnamese Communists are sending out mixed signals, probably in an effort to suggest some flexibility on their part without actually abandoning any of their maximum positions.

After two weeks, the Chinese Communists have announced only that their ninth party congress has "unanimously" approved the new party constitution and the political report given by Mao's heir apparent, Lin Piao. Peking has announced that discussions leading up to the election of a new central committee did not begin until 15 April, suggesting that differences between the various party factions still have not been settled.

An increasing willingness on the part of local Cambodian officials to act on long-standing instructions to limit Communist activities along the border with Vietnam reflects Phnom Penh's growing preoccupation with the problem of the Communist presence. The change in the Cambodian attitude is largely a result of heavier fighting along the border and increasing Communist encroachments in the southern half of Cambodia over the past several years.

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## HARD-LINE NORTH KOREANS REVIVE TENSION WITH US

North Korea's shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft over the Sea of Japan has all the earmarks of a deliberate action designed to revive an atmosphere of high tension with the US.

In light of the Pueblo experience, North Korean Premier Kim Il-song probably saw the attack on April 15 as a relatively low-risk opportunity to intensify the propaganda campaign against "US aggressive designs" and to undermine the credibility of US strength in the area. The Pyongyang leadership probably believes that a considerable body of world opinion is likely to be receptive to their claim that the aircraft had violated North Korean airspace.

The attack also enables the hard-line North Korean leadership to focus domestic attention on this challenge to US power rather than on Pyongyang's frustrating inability to launch a so-called "people's war" in the South, or to keep pace with the economic progress of South Korea. Pyongyang may also have been looking for a riposte to the joint US - South Korean "Focus Retina" military exercise last month. Earlier they had reacted by initiating harassments in the Demilitarized Zone and by adopting a more belligerent posture in blocking routine boundary-marker replacement actions by the United Nations Command.

Incidents such as the shoot-down permit Kil Il-song effectively to upstage Moscow and Peking as well as to score points for his personal and nationalist self-assertion. He has created an effective contrast between North Korean boldness and the caution of Peking and Moscow in confronting the power of the US. North Korea has long insisted on the importance of the smaller countries in the Communist movement, to the point of strained relations with Moscow and Peking. A major theme of North Korean propaganda, particularly since the Pueblo incident, is that a determined small nation can defeat a "mighty imperialist."

Within hours of the shoot-down of the US aircraft, Pyongyang called for a meeting of the Military Armistice Commission on 18 April. The apparent aim is to portray North Korea as the aggrieved party, reduce the likelihood of US retaliation, and use the proposed meeting as a propaganda forum.

In April 1965, North Korean fighter aircraft attacked--but failed to shoot down--an RB-47 aircraft about 50 nautical miles off North Korea over the Sea of Japan. In the past, numerous US reconnaissance missions have been flown in this same general area, but there has been little North Korea reaction.

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# WEEKLY SUMMARY

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41

25 April 1969  
No. 0367/69



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## C O N T E N T S

(Information as of noon EST, 24 April 1969)

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NR Record

## NORTH KOREA SEEN ISOLATED ON PLANE INCIDENT

4

Since its shootdown of the US reconnaissance plane on 15 April, North Korea has maintained a cautious yet defiant attitude.

## NORTH KOREAN FOREIGN TRADE PATTERNS UNCHANGED

6

North Korea's foreign trade continues relatively stagnant as Communist economic aid dries up and Pyongyang concentrates on modernizing its military forces.

NR Record

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## FAR EAST

The North Koreans adopted a defensive yet defiant stance in their first formal pronouncement on the shootdown of the US reconnaissance plane last week. Pyongyang appears well aware of its weak international position and fully conscious of the hazards of further provocations against US aircraft or naval units. Although the North Koreans almost certainly will avoid any direct challenge to the US task force in the Sea of Japan, they may initiate some low-risk harassment activity in the DMZ area or guerrilla operations in the South to demonstrate their defiance.

The North Korean statement attempts, however, to offset the weakness of Pyongyang's claim that the US plane intruded into its territory by adopting a defiant stance with regard to any future US intrusions. The North Koreans seek to cast doubt on US intentions by warning that the US will exploit any North Korean defensive reaction to another intrusion as a pretext to "commit full-scale attack" which may lead to another "total war" in Korea.

The political opposition in Japan attempted to exploit popular concern that further incidents might lead to Japanese involvement in some new Korean hostilities. Japanese Government leaders, for their part, condemned the North Korean action and strongly supported the US position.

Communist military activity in South Vietnam has settled into a pattern of sporadic shelling and brief but occasionally fierce ground battles. The trend toward disengagement by Communist main forces, first noted in late March, continues to hold.

Meanwhile, South Vietnamese political groups continue to maneuver in the wake of President Thieu's announced intention to form a new political grouping to compete with the Communists. One problem that seems likely to hamper Thieu's efforts to mold national political unity is the reaction to the government's heavy-handed treatment of the press. Four more Saigon newspapers were suspended in the past week; 25 papers have now been closed since formal press censorship was lifted last May.

Communist China's ninth party congress drew to an end this week with the election of a new and larger central committee. Mao, Lin Piao, and Chou En-lai continue to occupy the top three positions in China's hierarchy.

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## NORTH KOREA SEEN ISOLATED ON PLANE INCIDENT

Since its shootdown of the US reconnaissance plane on 15 April, North Korea has maintained a cautious yet defiant attitude.

Pyongyang's propaganda on the incident thus far has been sparse. The elapse of five days before North Korea responded to President Nixon's announcement that reconnaissance flights were to be resumed--with protection--reflects the regime's desire fully to assess US intentions. The defensive tone of Pyongyang's statement on 23 April shows that the North Korean leaders are well aware of their weak international position and fully conscious of the hazards in further military provocations at this time.

An incident along the central sector of the Demilitarized Zone on 23 April apparently was not directly related to Pyongyang's reaction to the resumption of US reconnaissance flights. The North Koreans fired on a UN command guard post, probably in order to cover the retreat of reconnaissance personnel who had stumbled into a minefield. The North Koreans presumably were attempting to collect information on South Korean and US force deployments since the shootdown on 15 April. Similar probes and encounters along the Demilitarized Zone occurred in the period immediately following the Pueblo

seizure. The skirmish was cited by a Pyongyang domestic service broadcast as a serious "new provocation" by the US.

The North Koreans have made a feeble attempt to link the plane shootdown with the Pueblo affair, but the weakness of their case is evident in their failure to cite a precise location for the alleged air intrusion. An elaborate attempt was made to "document" the Pueblo's violation of North Korean waters.

Pyongyang appears anxious to offset the weakness of its position by attempting to play upon foreign uneasiness regarding US intentions. Its statement of 23 April sought to cast doubt on US intentions by warning that the US would exploit any North Korean defensive reaction to another intrusion as a pretext to "commit full-scale attack" which could lead to another "total war" in Korea.

North Korea's international isolation is underscored by the fact that only three Communist states--East Germany, North Vietnam, and Cuba--have wholeheartedly supported Pyongyang.

Peking on 21 April broke its week-long silence over the incident with an official news release

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attacking Moscow's "collusion" with the US after the shootdown. The Chinese merely quoted a "news report" stating that the US plane had "intruded" into North Korean airspace but made no mention of who shot down the plane, avoided any expression of direct support for the North Korean action, and dealt only mildly with the US. The statement contrasts with Peking's announcement of "firm support" for Pyongyang following the seizure of the Pueblo.

Peking's cautious handling of the incident--underscored by its silence until President Nixon set forth the US reaction--is consistent with the Chinese record of careful avoidance of being drawn into military conflict with the US in situations where vital national interests are not involved.

Soviet reaction has been restrained. The Russians made oral statements of concern in Moscow and Washington on 21 April about US naval deployments but their low-key reflected a desire not to add to existing tensions. Soviet media have given only mild support to North Korea's position. Moscow may intend this to convey a mild rebuke to Pyongyang.

The South Korean Government, while favoring a stronger response, seems to be making a deliberate effort to stay in step with the US position. Senior defense of-

officials welcomed the US announcement that the reconnaissance flights would be resumed and given protection, and President Park has indicated that South Korea will not take punitive action on its own against the North. An apparently deliberate effort by the authorities to moderate public reaction, however, has not concealed the widespread concern of many political leaders and private citizens that Pyongyang will be encouraged to undertake more such incidents in the future.

Tokyo has censured Pyongyang's action and given strong support for the US position. Opposition parties, attempting to exploit popular fears that Japan might become involved in Korean hostilities, have shifted the focus of their attacks from the plane incident itself to the US naval deployment in the Sea of Japan. Japanese news media have also reacted strongly against the US naval buildup, charging that the task force is larger than is needed.

The Korean episode has provided an unexpected opportunity for the Sato government to air its views on the importance it attaches to Japan's security treaty with the US, which comes up for review next year. Japanese officials have emphasized the value to Japan of America's defense efforts in Korea, a point largely overlooked by the Japanese public.

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# WEEKLY SUMMARY

10

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45

2 May 1969  
No. 0368/69

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## C O N T E N T S

(Information as of noon EDT, 1 May 1969)

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NR Record

NORTH KOREA SEEKING FOREIGN SUPPORT ON PLANE INCIDENT

9

Pyongyang has shown increased frustration over its failure to obtain foreign support for its version of the shootdown of the US reconnaissance aircraft.

NR Record

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Page i WEEKLY SUMMARY 2 May 69



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## NORTH KOREA SEEKING FOREIGN SUPPORT ON PLANE INCIDENT

Pyongyang has shown increased frustration over its failure to obtain foreign support for its version of the shootdown of the US reconnaissance aircraft.

North Korea's limited foreign propaganda probably is related to the lack of international support its version of the incident has received. During the week, the regime began prodding its allies and friends to back publicly its claim that the US aircraft was shot down after it had violated North Korean airspace. [REDACTED]

Moscow's first editorial comment on the incident finally

appeared on 27 April, after the US naval task force had left the Sea of Japan. The editorial claimed that the "Soviet people" condemned the "dangerous actions" of the US in the Korean area. This comment, which is the closest the Soviets have come to a clear endorsement of North Korean actions, probably was stimulated by Pyongyang's urgings.

Only one broadcast from Pyongyang during the past week attempted to exploit the shoot-down. Pyongyang radio on 24 April focused directly on Japanese fears of being dragged into a new Korean conflict because of the Japan-US security treaty. The statement criticized the Japanese Government's support of the US reaction to the incident as "openly taking a hand in moves for the provocation of a new war in Korea." Pyongyang has as yet made no comment on the removal of the US naval task force from the Sea of Japan. [REDACTED]

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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

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51

16 April 1969

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~~Secret~~

~~SECRET~~No. 0091/69  
16 April 1969*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

## CONTENTS

North Korea: Yesterday's shootdown appears to  
have been deliberate. (Page 2)

NR Record

NR Record

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North Korea: [Yesterday's shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft over the Sea of Japan has all the earmarks of a deliberate action.]

[Pyongyang radio linked this incident with an allegedly simultaneous US "provocation" along the military demarcation line and enjoined the US "aggressors" to bear in mind that North Korean warnings of retaliation are "not empty words." The North Koreans probably believe that, in the aftermath of the Pueblo affair, a considerable body of world opinion is likely to be receptive to their claim that the aircraft had violated North Korean airspace.]

[Pyongyang's prompt move to call for a Military Armistice Commission meeting on 18 April apparently is designed to portray North Korea as the aggrieved party and to provide an effective propaganda forum for elaborating charges of US "aggression."]

[In taking the calculated risk of shooting down the US aircraft, the North Koreans probably were motivated in part by a desire to offset the failure of their attempts over the past year to generate an "armed guerrilla struggle" in South Korea and to undermine and demoralize the Seoul government.]

[Since the crushing of their ambitious infiltration operation on South Korea's east coast last November, North Korean harassment and pressures along the Demilitarized Zone have declined to the low level that usually characterizes the winter months. This latest act of defiance against the US may be intended as a forerunner of another round of aggressive pressure in the Demilitarized Zone area as the weather improves.]

(continued)

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[The Kim Il-sung regime may also have intended this move as a forceful demonstration to the new US administration that North Korea has no intention of retreating from its unconventional warfare campaign against South Korea.]

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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

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17 April 1969

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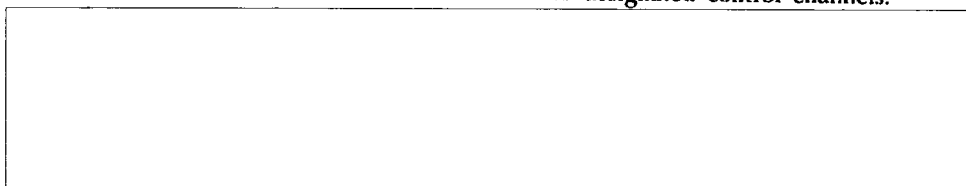
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TCS No. 516/69  
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NR Record

Korea: South Korean spokesmen have called for strong US retaliation for the shootdown; North Korean military activity is cautious and defensive. (Page 2)

NR Record

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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Korea: The South Korean Government has thus far not taken an official position on the shootdown of a US reconnaissance aircraft by North Korea. Spokesmen for the government and opposition parties in South Korea, however, have called for the US to take strong retaliatory action to prevent more such incidents.

The incident is cited by some South Korean commentators as further evidence of South Korea's need for additional US military assistance. Underlying the South Korean reaction is concern over the US resolve to deal firmly with North Korean attacks.

Japanese Government spokesmen, citing lack of detailed information, have refrained from denouncing North Korea. Yesterday, Foreign Minister Aichi was put on the defensive in the Diet by the opposition with a heavy barrage of questions regarding the implications of the incident for Japan. The Socialists and Communists, stressing that the plane was from a US base in Japan, are exploiting popular fears that Japan might become embroiled in a Korean conflict. This line promotes the leftist campaign to scrap the US-Japan security treaty.

The Japanese press has developed the theme that an increase in tension in the area might dim prospects for an early return of Okinawa to Japanese administration.

\* \* \* \*

The Soviet Union, whose ships and aircraft have joined in the search for survivors, has used both US and North Korean press agency reports of the incident, but Soviet press commentary has supported the North Koreans.

Because Soviet ships were closest to the crash site, Moscow probably believed it had to help as long as there was the possibility of survivors. The Soviets may also believe their cooperation may help deter US retaliation, and relations with the US

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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will thus not be endangered. Moscow may not mind if Pyongyang sees the cooperative search operations, in which the Soviets have recovered debris, as a tacit rebuke for its action against the US aircraft.

\* \* \* \*

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North Korean military activity since the shoot-down has been cautious and defensive. [REDACTED]

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UN Command forces along the Demilitarized Zone have been placed on full alert. A North Korean claim that US forces fired into the Demilitarized Zone on 15 April is unsubstantiated. [REDACTED]

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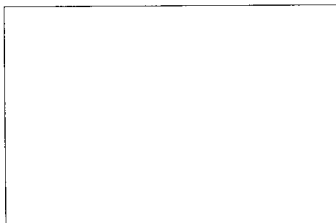
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18 April 1969

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NR Record

Korea: The North Korean regime is exploiting the  
shootdown to rally the population around the lead-  
ership. (Page 2)

NR Record

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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(b)(3)

Korea: The North Korean regime is exploiting the shootdown of the US aircraft on 15 April to rally the population around the leadership of Kim Il-song and the Communist Party.

In a congratulatory statement to the unit which was involved in the attack, Defense Minister Choe Hyon called the US flight a link in a premeditated scheme to provoke a new war. He depicted the incident as showing that "war may break out at any moment."

The Pyongyang leadership long has used the threat of a US invasion to justify the party's harsh demands on the population. Periodic "proof" that the threat is real is essential if the war psychosis is to be sustained for exploitation by the regime.

\* \* \* \*

The South Korean Government appears anxious not to get too far ahead of the US position on the shootdown. In a relatively moderate statement, the government yesterday condemned the "outrageous, illegal, barbaric" North Korean action and called on the "US and the free world...to take prompt and effective countermeasures to prevent once and for all the Northern puppets from playing with fire and provoking war." The statement avoided any demand for immediate military retaliation and asserted only that North Korea's leaders "should receive due punishment for the crime they committed." The Seoul press, however, is continuing to call for immediate retaliation.

\* \* \* \*

Japanese Prime Minister Sato publicly censured Pyongyang in the Diet yesterday, stating that the North Korean action should be "internationally condemned." He noted that "all countries" engage in reconnaissance flights for the purpose of security, and he stipulated that such operations from Japanese

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bases did not require prior consultations under the security treaty. Sato, however, has expressed what is clearly the Japanese public's hope that the US will take a cautious attitude and that the incident will not develop into any further conflict. This hope has also been reflected in commentary by Foreign Minister Aichi, Japanese defense officials, and the news media. Sato also implied a concern that US retaliation might affect the progress of negotiations on the return of Okinawa to Japanese administration.

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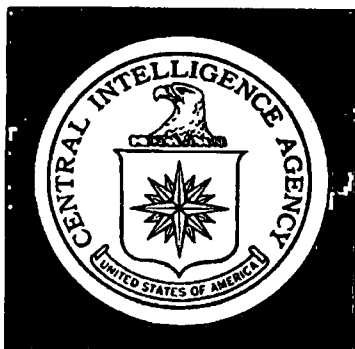
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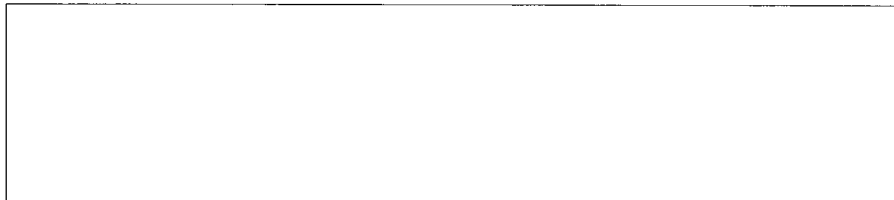
19 April 1969

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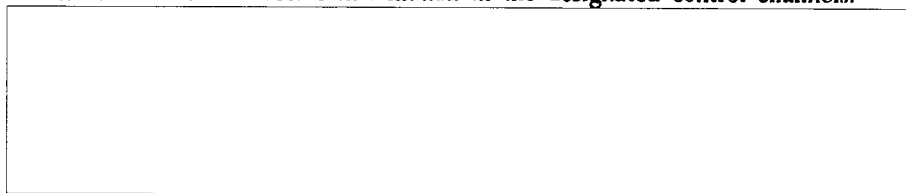


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[redacted]  
19 April 1969

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Korea: North Korea has not yet commented on President Nixon's statement. [redacted] (Page 2)

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NR Record

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

NR Record

NR Record

[ Korea: Pyongyang has as yet made no comment on President Nixon's announcement that reconnaissance flights will be resumed with adequate protection.

A domestic broadcast from Pyongyang last night, however, pledged that the Korean people "will in the future, too, mete out severe punishment to aggressors who infringe upon the sovereignty of our country."

There are no indications that North Korean forces are preparing for offensive action [REDACTED]

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The South Korean Government has not made an official comment on the press conference, but initial unofficial reactions are mixed. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] A leading newspaper described the decision as "well-calculated self-restraint, preferring negotiation rather than confrontation." ]

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(continued)

19 Apr 69

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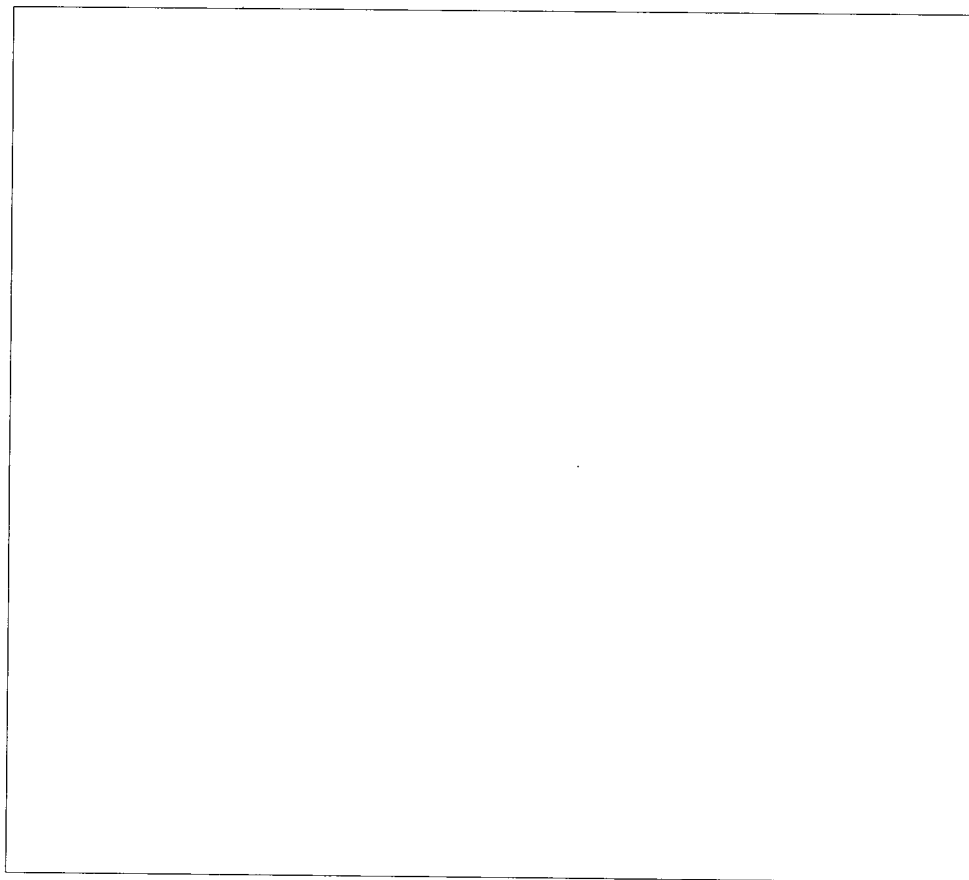
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NR Record

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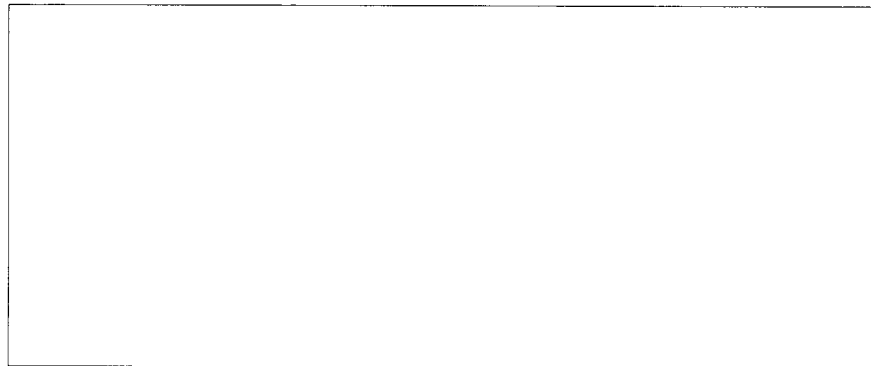
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21 April 1969

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[REDACTED]

NR Record

North Korea: Pyongyang fails to win much international support for its attack on the EC-121. (Page 3)

[REDACTED]

NR Record

[REDACTED]

NR Record

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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(b)(3)

North Korea: Pyongyang's light propaganda coverage thus far of the EC-121 shootdown probably reflects the realization that it is not receiving international support for its claims.

The sparse coverage on the incident in the North Korean press and radio seems geared primarily to further the regime's domestic goals. A statement by Defense Minister Choe Hyon and an editorial in the party newspaper both interpret the 15 April incident as further proof that the Korean people must prepare themselves "more thoroughly" politically and ideologically to carry out the party's program. The North Koreans have not yet made any specific reference to the US announcement that it will resume reconnaissance flights and send a task force to Korean waters.

Only three Communist states--East Germany, North Vietnam, and Cuba--have given full support to Pyongyang's claims that the EC-121 violated North Korean airspace. Articles from Belgrade, Warsaw, and Bucharest describe US flights as "near" or "in the region of" North Korean borders. Peking has made no comment on the incident, and Albania, Peking's close ally, did not even mention North Korea when commenting on Nixon's press conference. Moscow still has made no authoritative commentary on the attack, and this, combined with Soviet cooperation in searching for survivors, is almost certainly interpreted by Pyongyang as disapproval of its conduct.

The Japanese Government has strongly supported the US position and publicly censured Pyongyang. Cabinet Secretary Hori stated that Japanese security requires these reconnaissance flights, and he dismissed opposition charges that President Nixon's order to protect the flights would heighten tension, saying that protection would prevent further incidents.

North Korea has taken defensive measures against the possibility of US retaliation. [REDACTED]

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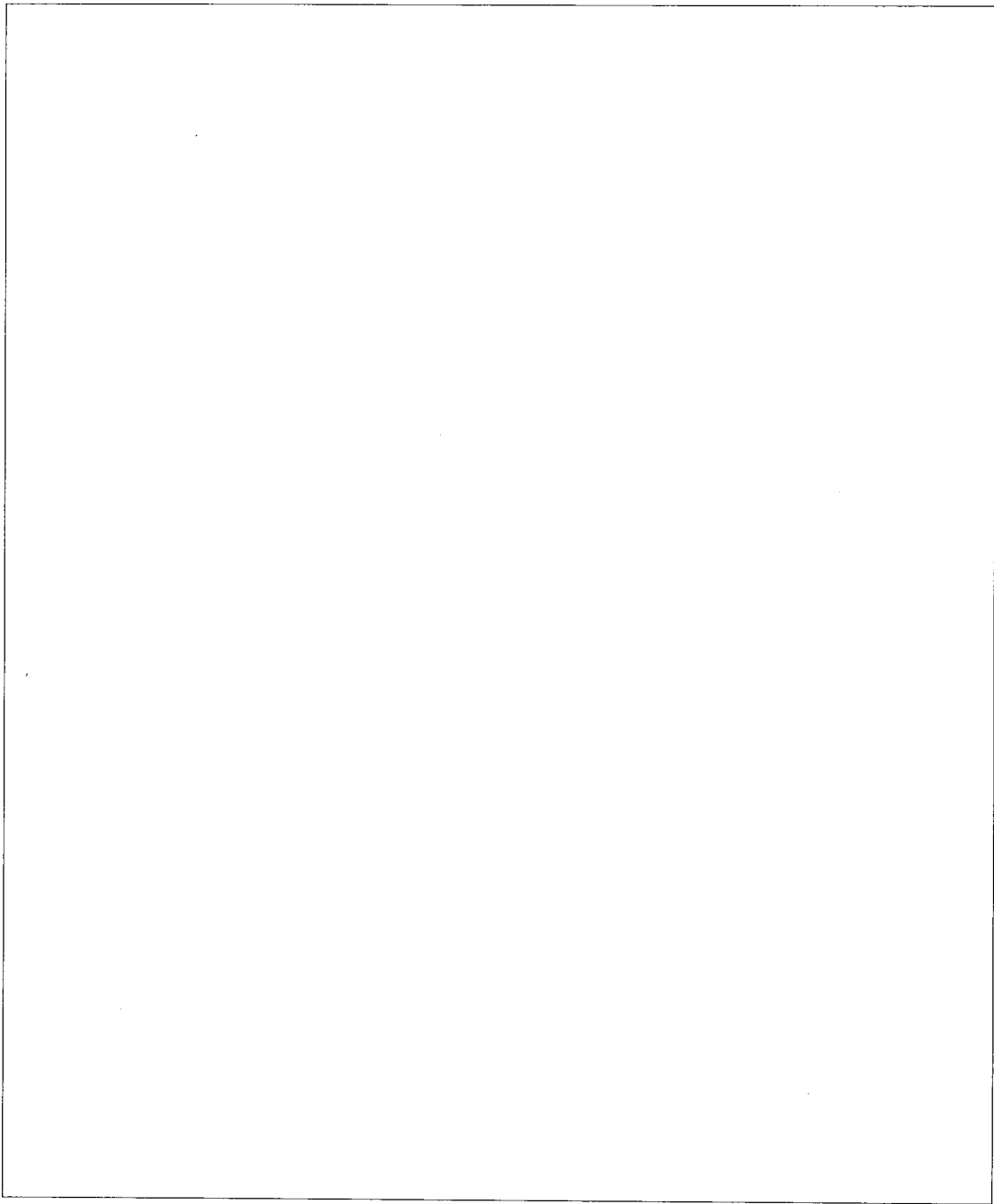
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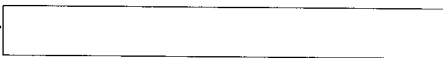


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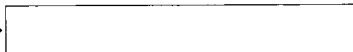
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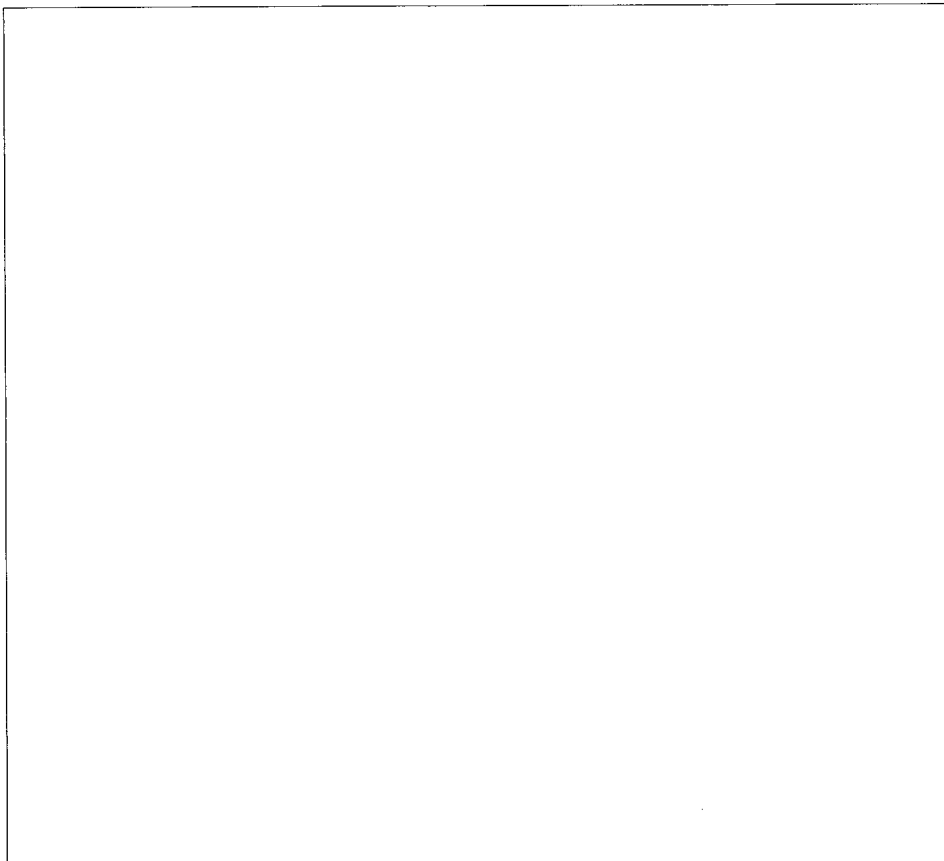
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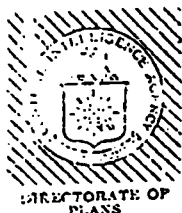
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## Intelligence Information Cable

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PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

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CITE

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21 23 26Z APR 69

DIST 21 APRIL 1969

COUNTRY NORTH KOREA

DOI MID-APRIL 1968

 SUBJECT NO EVIDENCE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IN  
 PYONGYANG FOLLOWING EC-121 INCIDENT

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## CORRECTION

1. IN PYONGYANG, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF MILITARY ACTIVITY OR TROOP MOVEMENT FOLLOWING THE SHOOTDOWN OF THE U.S. RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT, EXCEPT THAT FIRING OF ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY WAS HEARD FOUR OR FIVE TIMES [REDACTED] THERE (b)(1)  
 NO NEWS WHETHER OR NOT THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE CAPTURED CREW MEMBERS OF (b)(3)  
 THE U.S. AIRCRAFT.

2. [REDACTED] (b)(1)

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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

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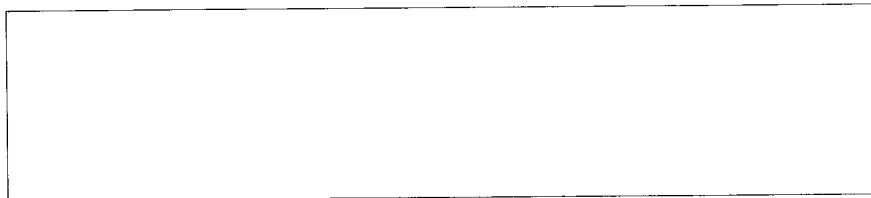
23 April 1969

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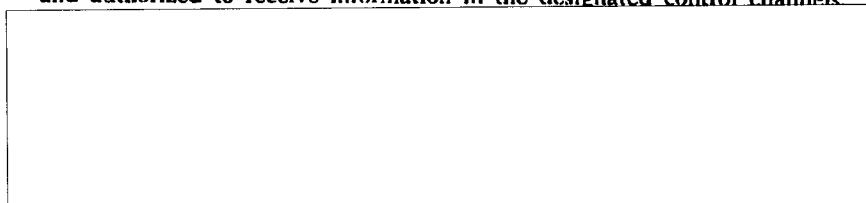
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Korea: Peking's belated comment on the shootdown  
avoids giving direct support to Pyongyang. (Page 2)

NR Record

~~TOP SECRET~~

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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Korea: Peking's belated comment on the shoot-down of the US aircraft has avoided giving direct support to Pyongyang.

On 21 April Peking broke its week-old silence over the incident with an official news release attacking Moscow's "collusion" with the US following the shootdown. While denouncing the Soviets' assistance and cooperation during the past week as "active service provided to US imperialism," the article cited a "news report" source stating that the US plane "intruded" into North Korean airspace. The dispatch made no mention, however, of who shot down the plane.

Peking's statement contrasts with its announcement last year concerning the seizure of the Pueblo. At that time, China promised "firm support" for Pyongyang's "just stand." Sino - North Korean relations have been poor for several years, and Peking's ambivalent response may reflect a decision to withhold significant propaganda coverage of the incident, at least until the North Koreans make further statements.

In Japan, opposition parties have shifted their attacks from the plane incident itself to the US naval deployment. Socialist, Communist, and other opposition Diet members belabored Foreign Minister Aichi yesterday with demands that the government ask the US to "stop raising tension in the Sea of Japan." Aichi turned aside these demands as well as opposition insistence that any port calls by task force units be made subject to the prior consultations clause of the US-Japan security treaty.

Japanese news media have also reacted strongly against the US naval buildup in the Sea of Japan. One leading newspaper questioned US intentions, and observed that the task force was larger than was needed for protecting reconnaissance aircraft. Assurances from official spokesmen that the escort

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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aircraft would not be flown from US bases in Japan  
have not assuaged popular fears that Japan might be-  
come involved in any US - North Korean clash.

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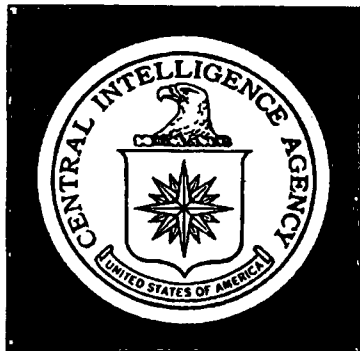
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24 April 1969

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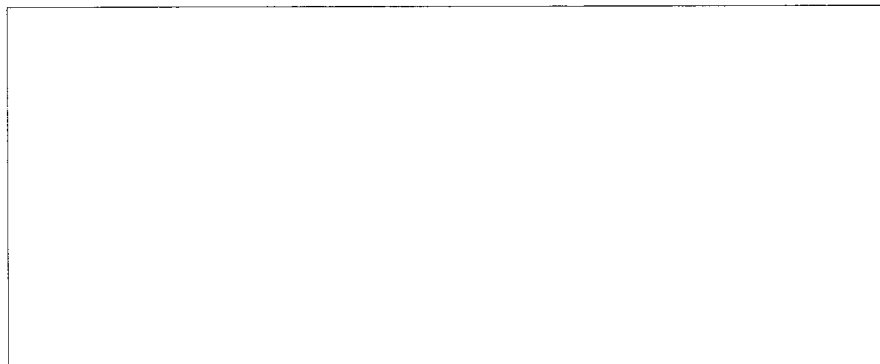
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[REDACTED] NR Record

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stance in its first formal statement on the shootdown.  
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[REDACTED] NR Record

TOP SECRET [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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Korea: Pyongyang has adopted a defensive yet defiant stance in its first formal pronouncement on the EC-121 incident.

The North Koreans clearly have been playing for time in which to assess US intentions. The defensive tone of the government statement on 23 April suggests that the North Korean leaders are well aware of their weak international position and are fully conscious of the hazards in any further military provocations against heavily defended US fleet units and installations.

The North Koreans made a feeble attempt to link the EC-121 with the Pueblo affair, but the weakness of their case is evident in their failure to cite a precise location for the alleged intrusion of the US plane. The omission of details contrasts sharply with the elaborate attempt to "document" the Pueblo's violation of North Korean waters.

The statement attempts to offset the weakness of the North Korean claim by adopting a defiant stance with regard to any future US intrusions. In an obvious attempt to play upon foreign uneasiness regarding US intentions, the statement claims there is no "guarantee" that US flights "will not intrude again." It further seeks to cast doubt on US intentions by warning that the US will exploit any North Korean defensive reaction as a pretext to "commit full-scale attack" which may lead to another "total war" in Korea.

(b)(1)  
(b)(3)

[REDACTED]

An incident along the central sector of the Demilitarized Zone on 23 April apparently was not directly related to Pyongyang's response to the resumption of US reconnaissance flights. The North

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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Koreans fired on a UN Command guard post, probably in order to cover the retreat of reconnaissance personnel who had stumbled into a nearby minefield two hours earlier.

The North Koreans presumably were attempting to collect information on South Korean and US force deployments since the shootdown on 15 April. Similar probes and encounters along the Demilitarized Zone occurred in the period immediately following the Pueblo seizure. The fire fight was cited by a Pyongyang domestic service broadcast as a serious "new provocation" by the US.

\* \* \* \*

South Korea appears to be continuing to make a deliberate effort to keep in step with the US position. [REDACTED]

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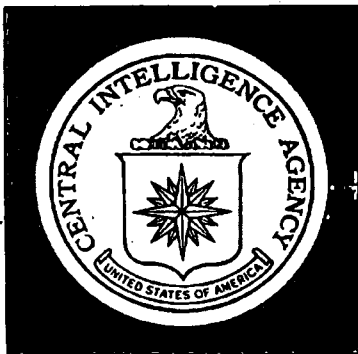
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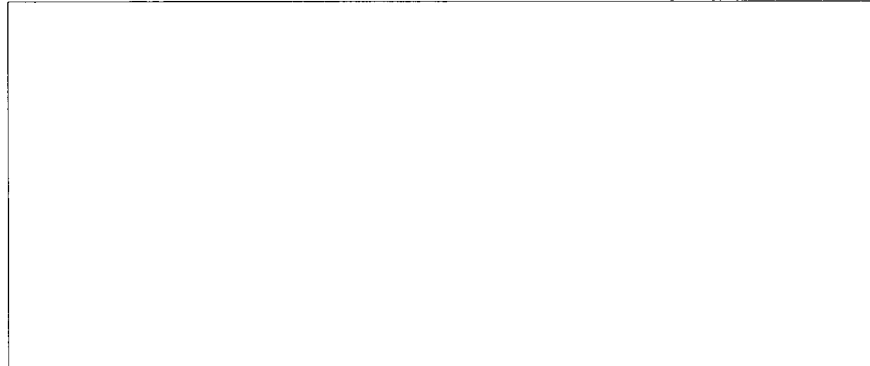
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NR Record

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Korea: Pyongyang is showing increased frustration over its failure to obtain foreign support for its version of the incident of 15 April.

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

Moscow's first editorial comment on the affair, contained in Pravda on 27 April, may have been a result of similar prodding. According to the US Embassy in Moscow, the article claimed that the "Soviet people" condemned the "dangerous actions" of the US in the area. This is the closest the Soviets have come to a clear endorsement of North Korean actions.

The article probably reflects Moscow's estimate that the most dangerous part of the US - North Korean confrontation is past, and that the likelihood of Soviet involvement has lessened accordingly. By stating that the US "must" stop its activities--

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~~TOP SECRET~~

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]

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particularly the concentration of forces in the Sea of Japan--the article also served to convey Moscow's uneasiness over a US task force operating relatively near the Soviet Union.

North Korea has made no public comment as yet on the dispersal of US naval units from the Sea of Japan. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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CITE

DIST 19 APRIL 1969

COUNTRY NORTH KOREA JAPAN

DOI

SUBJECT CALM REACTION TO THE EC-121 INCIDENT WITHIN THE PRO-  
P'YONGYANG JAPAN-KOREA SOCIETY; JAPANESE COMMUNIST PROPAG-  
ANDA LINE TO EXPLOIT THIS INCIDENT

AC9

SOURCE

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(b)(1)

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1. THERE IS NO SERIOUS CONCERN THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL RETALI-  
ATE MILITARILY AGAINST NORTH KOREA FOR THE SHOOTING DOWN THIS WEEK  
OF THE AMERICAN EC-121 RECONNAISSANCE PLANE, [REDACTED]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] NEITHER OF THE TWO LEADING PE-O-P'YONGYANG ORGANIZATIONS IN JAPAN;  
THE JKS AND CHOSEN SOREN, ARE PARTICULARLY ALARMED BY THIS NEW  
INCIDENT. [REDACTED] CONTRASTED THIS TO THE TIME OF THE PUEBLO  
INCIDENT A YEAR AGO, WHEN TENSION WAS GREATLY HEIGHTENED BY THE IMMEDI-  
ATE DISPATCH OF THE "USS ENTERPRISE" AND OTHER WARSHIPS TO THE AREA  
OFF THE NORTH KOREAN COAST.

(b)(1)

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(b)(1)

(b)(3)

2. [REDACTED] DOES NOT EXPECT THE UNITED STATES TO TRY TO  
HEIGHTEN TENSION AND POSE A MILITARY THREAT AGAINST NORTH KOREA,  
AS WAS DONE AFTER THE PUEBLO INCIDENT. [REDACTED] MOST IMPORT-  
ANT TO MONITOR CLOSELY THE CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC REACTIONS IN THE  
UNITED STATES TO THIS EC-121 INCIDENT. [REDACTED]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

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3.

[REDACTED] THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK FOR JKS NOW IS TO

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PROMULGATE, WITHIN THE JAPANESE DIET AND JAPANESE MASS MEDIA,  
THE FOLLOWING PROPAGANDA LINES:

(A) THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE PUEBLO "SPY SHIP" INCIDENT  
AND THE EC-121 "SPY PLANE" INCIDENT;

(B) THE DANGER OF JAPAN BEING DRAGGED INTO ANY NEW KOREAN WAR  
THAT MIGHT DEVELOP FROM THE EC-121 INCIDENT, SINCE THE PLANE ORIGIN-  
ATED FROM ATSUGI NAVAL AIR STATION IN JAPAN AND SINCE JAPAN IS TIED  
TO THE UNITED STATES BY THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY; AND

(C) THE "MEANINGLESSNESS" OF THE PRIOR CONSULTATION CLAUSE  
IN THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY.

4. [ ] DISSEM: CINCPAC PACFLT PACAF ARPAC STATE ARMAIT NAVATT  
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